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Signaling Through The Flames



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Chapter 1 by ELIZABETH STARKS

I remember the day it all went to garbage too well. The chaos as riots broke out, the virus spreading faster. My family came down with it by Day 6, and I was the only healthy one left. I had read enough dystopia novels and seen enough zombie movies to know what to do. I packed a bag-clothes, food, water, a knife, matches, and a basic survival guide book. I left them, which seems cruel-but I knew they were doomed and I would be too if I stayed. The first nights I spent on my own, trying to avoid looters and surviving rioters. On the 5th night, a family hiding out in a gas station allowed me to stay there, and I listened to the news on the radio with them-or at least, the sorry remnants of radio news-fatality rates of the disease were at 95%. Only an estimated 750 million were still alive, and that number was dropping fast. The last of the government had been taken over by some soldiers gone rogue, but even they were dropping like flies. I'll never forget that family that took me in. I was certainly a drag on their supplies, but they let me stay-a whole six months. I'd probably have been murdered or infected if it weren't for them. Eventually though, they too were infected and insisted I go, taking their last supplies with me. I did as they asked, and left. Now we fast forward to today. I'm about 21 now, or at least I think I'm about that old. And it was all about to change for me-again.

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